

# WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

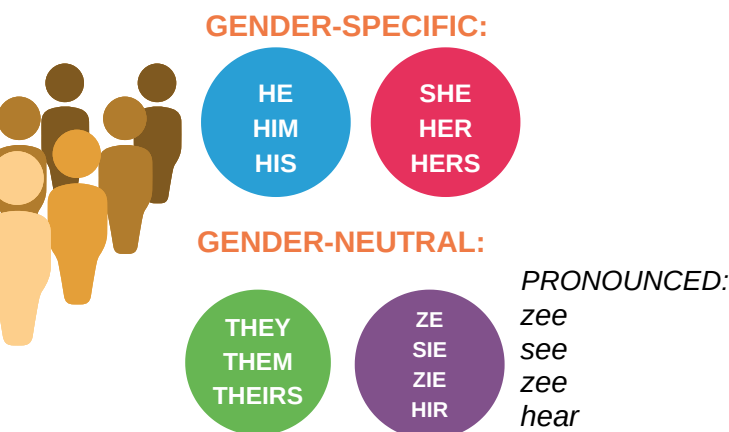
Pronouns are the way we refer to each other in the third person.

People may use multiple pronouns in different combinations and **there are many gender identities and pronouns beyond these listed.**

People may choose to explain why they use specific pronouns, or it may be a private matter. Some people who are **gender-neutral or transitioning may use non-binary/inclusive pronouns.**

## what is GENDER NEUTRAL & GENDER EXPANSIVE?

An umbrella term sometimes used to describe people who expand notions of gender expression and identity beyond perceived or expected societal gender norms...



## why PRONOUNS are important in the workplace:

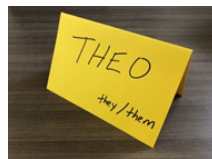
- + shows **respect**
- + creates an **inclusive** work environment
- + more people are in the workforce who identify as transgender and/or gender expansive/non-binary

## PRONOUNS in action:

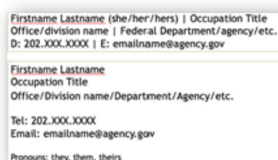
"**They** are a writer and wrote that book **themselves**. Those ideas are **theirs**. I like both **them** and **their** ideas."

"**Ze** is a writer and wrote that book **hirsself**. Those ideas are **hirs**. I like both **hir** and **hir** ideas."

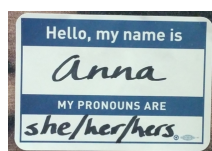
## how to use PRONOUNS to demonstrate allyship:



**Start meetings** with everyone introducing themselves and stating their pronouns.



Include your pronouns in your **email signature.**



When attending meetings or events, **add your pronouns to your name tag.**

If you find yourself unsure of someone's pronoun, **be attentive** to how others refer to this person.

If you are still unclear or concerned that people might be using the incorrect pronoun, **politely and privately** ask that person what pronoun they use.

## BEST PRACTICES:



**Acknowledge mistakes, apologize, and correct yourself when using the wrong pronoun.**



Ensure that you do not make a big deal out of the mistake. **Make the correction & move forward in the conversation.** Most people appreciate a quick apology and correction at the time of the mistake!



Using a person's pronouns correctly is a way to **respect** someone and **create an inclusive environment**, just as using a person's name can be a way to respect them!

## LEARN MORE:

Stay up-to-date on this evolving topic by bookmarking: <https://go.usa.gov/x6aj3>

### Authors:



EDI SGM Portfolio and SGM Engagement Committee with LGBT-Fellows and Friends and Salutaris: The NIH SGM Employee Resource Group

### Sources:



"Pronouns Matter" | <https://www.mypronouns.org>  
"Gender Pronouns: A Provider's Guide to Referring to Transgender Patients" | <https://www.prideinpractice.org/articles/transgender-pronouns-guide/>  
"Personal Pronouns" | <https://teaching.cambriancollege.ca/personal-pronouns/>